9:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936)1936 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

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As soon as the cutting is finished the boys go and sit in front of the hut before which the operation has taken place. If they are able to do so they walk unaided with their heads held back from the shoulder. Otherwise they are assisted. Seated with their backs to the hut and with their heads held back they wave away flies from their lacerated foreheads. Meanwhile their mothers and the other women present utter ceremonial cries of joy as they dance in front of them (*bɛ yi wa kuk*).

The lines cut are six in number but occasionally one meets men with seven cuts. Father Crazzolara says that this is due to the fact that the operator "in his artistic elation, forgets to count, and adds one or two lines beyond the number demanded by the fashion that prevails at the time."[1] This does not seem to me a very likely explanation. In Lou country I was invariable told that when two brothers were initiated at the same time the youngest received seven cuts, a statement borne out by the several cases I was able to investigate. A youth from Lek country on the Bahr-el-Ghazal who had seven cuts on his forehead told me that it was the custom in his tribe for the eldest son in a family to receive an extra cut but I was unable to check his statement from other informants. Miss Huffman writes that sometimes the operator "happens to be a very dear friend of the boy and may honour him by cutting seven cuts instead of the customary six."[2]

I do not think that there is any need to emphasize the severity of the ordeal, which may readily be understood from Father Crazzolara's statement that the cuts are distinctly visible on the skulls of dead Nuer. [165] It is surprising therefore that it does not often result in death. Yet I have never heard of a boy dying during or after the operation though I made enquiries on the point, and the staff of the American Mission at Nasser told me that in their long experience of the country they had never heard of a fatal operation. Father Crazzolara on the other hand states that death is not infrequent.[3]

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On the day on which a boy is initiated from four to ten pots of beer

[1] *Op cit*, p. 32. "Es soll vorkommen, das der Garmeister manchmal in Eifer für seine Kunst, das Zählen vergisst, und eine oder zwei Linien mehr aufträgt als das Gesitz verlangt. Deswegen wird vielfach ein Beisitzer aufgestellt, der darauf zu sehen hat, dass der Patient nicht mehr als nötig gequält werde."

[2] *Op cit*, p. 32.

[3] "Die ersten 24 bis 28 Stunden sind die ernstesten, wegen der Gefahr des Verblutens. Es ist keine Seltenheit, dass ein alter Mann, der nachts oder in aller Frühe nachsehen kommt, einen der Knaben unbeweglich, ja in der Todesstarre antrifft." *Id.*, p. 32.

11:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1945
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583 of adulterous unions in which these women have at any time lived. This would be too difficult. The Dok girl of Homestead No. XX is therefore included among the widow-concubines.

The third column lists the children born of thirty-two of these women according to the type of union in which they were born. Nyaleeni ♀ of Homestead No. XXIV is not included as no enquiry was made about her children. This column gives us some rough vital statistics for it shows a total of 109 children, an average of 3.4 children per woman, or, if we exclude the two barren women from this calculation, 3.6 children per woman. Women in advanced pregnancy were counted as having given birth to a single child. I say that these statistics are rough because there can be no doubt that a large number of children who died at birth or in infancy have not been recorded. Indeed no special enquiry into this matter was prosecuted. The number of children born per fertile woman is therefore probably much higher than 3.6, perhaps being as high as 5.0. It is also possible that there are more than 2 barren women in the village.

	Union of 33 women in 1936	Total unions of 33 women	Children of 32 women
Wives in simple legal marriage	3	23	44
Female husbands ..	1	1	—
Wives of female husbands ..	3	3	5
Wives in ghost-marriage ..	5	5	6
Wives in leviritic marriage ..	2	4	12
Widow-concubines	6	14	36
Unmarried concubines ..	3	5	3
Women living in adultery ..	1	—	3
Old women without mates ..	9	—	—

Certain considerations must be kept in mind if a false impresion is not to be created by these figures. Wives of female husbands and wives in ghost-marriage are to all intents and purposes in the same legal position as wives in simple legal marriages. If we include also wives in leviritic marriage we have a total of thirteen women living in one or other form of legal marriage and ten women living in one or other form of concubinage. It [591] must be remembered also that a number of young men of the village have young wives in the villages of their parents-in-law for it is Nuer custom that a wife does not join her husband till after she has weaned her first child.

162 The number of widow-concubines and of old women without mates
● 165 (who are also widows) suggests a very high mortality rate among males. This is partly due to the constant fighting that used to go on, and still to a lesser extent goes on between Nuer. In a number of cases recorded in the village women have been widowed by the violent death of their husbands.

583 The amount of concubinage is remarkable and contrasts with the relatively small number of leviritic unions. The number of divorces recorded is small and this is probably a true index for Nuerland as a whole.

14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

she may call herself 'a woman who has just given birth to a child' for months afterwards, and try to solicit privileges on that account. 846

Nuer mothers love their babies and try to do all they can in their limited way for them. Whatever the child may lack, it does not lack its mother's love while she is living. But if the mother dies life is a different thing for the child that is left. A new-born baby demands food, and the artificial feeding of babies is an art entirely unknown to the Nuer. What to do with the small piece of humanity is a serious proposition. 854

Rumour says that they may bury the new-born baby with the dead mother, arguing that it will die soon anyhow, but I do not know of any authentic case where the live child has been buried. It is, however, very true that the motherless baby soon follows its mother. Five motherless infants have been brought to the mission at Nasser, as the people know that the art of the artificial feeding of infants is not unknown there. Two of these babies died, while three have lived so far. 847 165

TWINS

Twins are not uncommon, but are usually a cause of distress to their parents, for they are sure that one will die—and it usually does fail to survive. The mother always nurses one child at one breast and the second child at the other breast, and thus divides the supply of food as evenly as she can between them. 845 [853]

When a man is the father of twins, his brother will sacrifice a sheep before he eats with him so that no harm may come to the babies.

The Nuer has a superstition in regard to the burial of new-born twins. Rumour says that they prefer to tie the hands together and hang them up in a tree rather than 766